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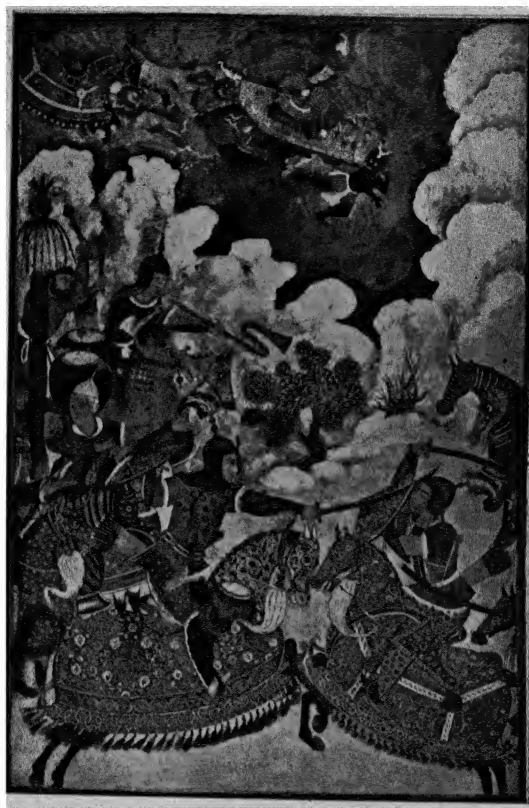


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columns of this list.



1740

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Any suggestions by clients, with a view to increasing the usefulness of this list, are solicited, and will, where practicable, be adopted.

To enable us to make this "List" as complete as possible, scholars are urged to send us full details of any work published, or in course of preparation by them. We will then announce it, thus helping to make it more widely known than might otherwise be the case.

REVIEWS, NOTES, NEWS.

It is with regret that we have to record the death of **Sir John Woodroffe**, one time Supreme Court Judge at Calcutta, and Oriental and Sanskrit scholar.

Sir John was perhaps better known to Orientalists as an authority on the Hindu Tantrik System, and his research into this led him to publish, under his pseudonym of Arthur Avalon, the well-known Tantrik Texts Series.

Of a studious and retiring nature, he devoted to a great part the remainder of his life on retirement from Judicial duties, to the study of the ancient Hindu philosophy, and publication of erudite works on this extremely tortuous subject followed.

His best known, and perhaps most popular work, is "The Serpent Power," translated from the Sanskrit; edition has succeeded edition of this fine work on Laya Yoga.

Among other of his works mention must be made of "Shakta and Shakti," "The Garland of Letters," and "The World as Power" Series.

India owes much to this fine scholar for his painstaking and earnest research in bringing to Western minds the means of understanding the esoterism of the East.

We also have to bring to the notice of Orientalists the death of that distinguished Prakrit scholar, **A. C. Woolner**.

Mr. Woolner will be remembered by students of this language (apart from his other writings) by his important work, "Introduction to Prakrit," which he published in 1917.

"The Contendings of the Apostles, being the Histories of the Lives and Martyrdoms and Deaths of the Twelve Apostles and Evangelists." Translated from the Ethiopic manuscripts in the British Museum by **Sir E. A. Wallis Budge**.

"The Book of the Mysteries of the Heavens and the Earth and other Works of **Bakhayla Mika'el (Zōsimās)**." The Ethiopic texts edited from the unique manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, with English translations by **Sir E. A. Wallis Budge**.

The first of these books is a reprint, in a much handier form, of the translation made by **Sir Wallis Budge** of the "Gadla Hāwāryāt," which first appeared in 1901. A publisher's note records the fact that the preface remained unfinished when **Sir E. A. Wallis Budge** died on November 23, 1934. Had he lived to complete the preface, he would probably have dealt with the many interesting problems connected with the various versions and recensions of the "Acts of the Apostles," a subject to which such masters as the late

William Wright and Professor Burkitt, as well as living scholars like R. H. Connolly have made such important contributions. The Coptic version, from which the Ethiopic, the last link in the chain of translations, derives, by way of the Arabic, was made doubtless from the Greek, but a Syriac version also survives, parts of which are most probably anterior to the Greek. Interesting are the successive transformations which the original is seen to undergo under the impact of the fertile imagination of Copt, Arab and Ethiopian.

Attractively produced and moderately priced, this edition should commend itself to students of apocryphal writings as well as to those who would like to know something of Abyssinian literature.

A romantic history attaches to the "Book of the Mysteries of the Heavens and the Earth." Brought to Europe from Abyssinia in the second half of the seventeenth century to enrich the library of Claude Fabri, Seigneur of Peirese, its contents aroused great interest, for it was rumoured to contain no less a work than the lost "Book of Enoch." These high hopes were, however, dashed to the ground, when the famous Ethiopic scholar Ludolf tracked the MS. down after much trouble, and having examined it, found that this much bruited work was not the long lost "Book of Enoch," but a late compilation by one Bakhayla Mikâ'êl. This book, or rather, collection of books, for there are four tracts in all, although not comparable in importance with the "Contendings of the Apostles," deserves far more than the sniff of contempt with which Ludolf dismissed it in his "History of Ethiopia." It is an important and highly characteristic example of the magical writings in which Ethiopic and Amharic literature are so rich, and should provide a fruitful field of study, more particularly perhaps from the aspect of its affiliations with Egyptian Gnosticism, an angle from which Ethiopic literature has rarely been studied.

This translation, the first to appear in English (Perruchon edited and translated into French the first tract only) contains, in addition, a facsimile of the whole MS., an invaluable asset to students of the text. It remains to be said that this large and handsomely produced volume is published at the astonishingly cheap price of seven shillings and sixpence and that only two hundred copies have been printed.

These two posthumous editions bring home to us once more the great debt which Ethiopic literature owes to the unremitting labours of the late Sir Wallis Budge.

"*Samdhinirmocana Sūtra, L'Explication des Mystères.*" Texte tibétain, édité et traduit par Étienne Lamotte. (Université de Louvain: Recueil de travaux publiés par les membres des Conférences d'Histoire et de Philologie, 2e Série, 34e Fascicule.) Louvain, 1935.

The heroic little band of orientalists who with herculean toil are cutting their way through the vast mass of ancient Buddhist literature contained—mostly in the form of translations—in the Tibetan Kanjur and Tanjur and the Chinese Tripiṭaka have long recognised the high importance of the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* as a classical exposition of Mahāyāna doctrine; and now one of them, a disciple of that brilliant master, Professor de La Vallée Poussin, has achieved with notable success the arduous task of printing the Tibetan text with French translation, preface and notes. The edition is based upon a block-print (No. 410 of Mdo V of the Kanjur in the Bibliothèque Nationale), and has been aided by comparison of the five Chinese translations (covering the whole or part of the text) and of four commentaries preserved in the Tanjur, viz., those of Asanga, Yuen-tse, Jnānagarbha, and an anonymous author.

Among the Buddhist Sūtras of the Mahāyāna which endeavour to explain away the fundamental discrepancy between the Hīnayāna, with its assertion of the reality of the innumerable dharmas or elements of being, and the doctrines of the Prajñāpāramitā texts, with their insistence on an absolute void, the Saṃdhinirmocana holds a leading position: its nameless author (or authors, for the work appears to be composite) was a metaphysician who could skilfully manipulate the theory of the "Three Characters" in order to establish the idealism developed out of the older Prajñāpāramitā doctrines; and the value of M. Lamotte's book is very greatly enhanced by his scholarly and illuminating preface, in which he surveys the stages through which Buddhist philosophic thought passed. It is a work of fine and useful scholarship, on which M. Lamotte and his venerable university may well be congratulated.

"**Laotzu's Tao and Wu Wei**" is a compilation that falls into three distinct parts. The first and most important is a new translation of the Tao Tê Ching from the pen of a Chinese bhikṣu or monk called Wai-tao, who learned English as a boy in a mission school, and later graduated in philosophy at Peiping. The second is a reprint of an interpretation of Taoism in narrative form, translated from the Dutch of Henri Borel; and the third consists of two slight historical essays on Taoist philosophy and religion by Dr. Kiang Kang-hu. The whole is edited by Mr. Dwight Goddard, a well known convert to Buddhism, who advances the bold hypothesis that the teachings of Sakya-muni percolated into China soon after his death, and having easily blended with the current Taoist philosophy, were ultimately credited to Lao Tzū himself. This, he thinks, will account for the singular affinities to Buddhist thought in the Tao Tê Ching, and also explain why Dhyanā Buddhism, which is nearly akin to Taoism in spirit, found such a congenial soil in China. The translation of Lao Tzū's sayings fails to convey the oracular terseness of the original, and adds little to our understanding of a text which after the labours of many commentators still remains full of obscurity. Its diffuseness may be illustrated by the following passage, which is generally understood to mean: "Nature is not benevolent: she treats all creatures like straw dogs (used at sacrifices)." The bhikṣu's version is: "Heaven and earth are not fallible and unjust like humans: they are always impartial. They have no favourites in giving kindness to the world: they give life to humans with the same impartiality they give life to dogs and plants." Again, in chapter 2: "The Sage occupies himself with inaction, and conveys instruction without words." This is rendered: "The perfect Sage in avoiding the limitations of relativity resorts to no compulsion, nor does he make invidious comparisons in teaching his people." It will be seen that this new translation, though professedly made "after studying many commentaries and talking with different Taoist masters and hermits," is one to be approached with caution.

"**The Spirit of Zen.**" By Alan W. Watts. This is one of the most thoughtful and stimulating books that have appeared in the "Wisdom of the East" series. Not that it professes to offer a complete explanation of the innermost meaning of Zen; no such explanation is possible, seeing that the essence of Zen is far too elusive to be expressed in any form of words. "The truth is," as the author remarks, "that in Zen as in life there is nothing at all which one can hold on to and say: This is it; I have got it." His purpose has been simply to give a clue to the spirit of Zen, and to outline some of the ways in which it has been turned into thought and action. This purpose has been admirably carried out. The first step towards "enlightenment" comes when

man realises that nothing can be found in the external world which he does not already possess in his own mind; it follows that he must turn inwards to the mind and look for his true nature there. This is the "mystic meditation" or mental concentration called Zen—a conveniently compact Japanese word derived from the Sanskrit *dhyāna* through the Chinese: it is pronounced *ch'an* in Northern Mandarin. Its object is to obtain a sudden discernment of the truth, a flash of illumination known as *satori*, which may at first be only partial and temporary, but if the seeker perseveres, will finally result in a sense of boundless freedom and a joy inexpressible. The method adopted in the monasteries of China and Japan is for the disciple to grapple with some question or problem of a wholly trivial or even ridiculous nature, but transcending the realm of logic and admitting of no intellectual solution. Several examples of these so-called *kō-an* will be found in Mr. Watts's book. In a series of fascinating chapters he gives a clear and succinct account of the origin and technique of Zen, describes the everyday life of a Zen community, and discusses the relation of the cult to Taoism and the civilisation of the Far East in general. Grateful acknowledgment is made to the recent publications of Professor Suzuki of Kyōto, which have already been reviewed in these pages.

"The Last of the Empresses." By DANIELE VARÈ. It is astonishing that this book, written in the purest of idiomatic English, should be the work of a foreigner, who has also several books to his credit in his native Italian. In a sprightly preface addressed to five erstwhile colleagues, later to become full-fledged Ministers Plenipotentiary, he recalls the glamour of old days in Peking, and the inspiration derived from Bland and Backhouse's "China under the Empress Dowager," which led him to take his own pen in hand. Certainly this is the fullest and most sympathetic account of Yehonala, afterwards known as Tz'ü Hsi, or more familiarly as the Old Buddha, that has appeared since her death. Tracing her career from the days when she was only "Little Chao" of Pewter Lane, Signor Varè builds up a shrewd estimate of her character. She was badly handicapped from the start, he thinks, in spite of all her natural gifts, by the misfortune of having to live in an age of transition, when China was on the threshold of momentous changes, and being obliged to gather information of the outside world through the eunuchs, who were ignorant, servile and corrupt. Her political mistakes, of which she committed not a few, were generally due to the fact that she did not possess sufficient elements of knowledge to enable her to judge a situation correctly. The story is well told, and becomes more enthralling from chapter to chapter, until we reach the climax in the Siege of the Legations in 1900. Especially memorable was the scene in the Palace on June 25 (the date is wrongly given here as the 26th), when by sheer force of personality the Empress quelled a dangerous riot under the leadership of Prince Tuan, who was unquestionably out for the Emperor's blood. Incidentally, this was the cause of one of the pauses in the attack which puzzled the besieged so much at the time, for in her anger the Empress authorised Jung-lu to discuss terms of peace. A few hours later, when she had heard of the repulse of Admiral Seymour's relief column, the fusillade was resumed.

True to life though the book is as biography, it might have been improved by a little more attention to accuracy in detail. The author does not seem to know Chinese well, and makes some strange blunders, as in explaining the meaning of Yüan Shih-k'ai's surname on page 231. The illustrations have little or no connection with the text, and the drawings which decorate the

initial letters of each chapter are hardly successful in conveying Chinese atmosphere.

"Aspects of Bengali Society from Old Bengali Literature." By **Tamonash Chandra Das Gupta, M.A., Ph.D.,** Lecturer, Calcutta University. The author of this volume has embodied some of the results of ten years' intensive study of the Bengali manuscripts belonging to Calcutta University in this singularly attractive volume, which consists of a series of essays on the everyday life, habits, pursuits, occupations and social customs of old Bengal. He has collected his materials with great diligence, and his erudite chapters constitute a valuable reconstruction of the life of the past.

They range over a great variety of subjects—ship-building and commerce, costume, ornaments, cooking, musical instruments, warfare, architecture, agriculture, and so on, with chapters on education, castes and professions, and Hindu-Moslem unity.

In constructing his illustrations—which are admirably executed—the author has searched through the archives of old mansions and country houses, where specimens have often been preserved of weapons, musical instruments, ornaments and the like, closely corresponding to those described in ancient texts.

It is hard to praise the book too highly—embodying as it does a mass of details, systematically arranged, which are essential to historical study, and for which all historians will be deeply grateful. Nowadays when changes are so rapid there is a danger that the past will be obliterated, and Mr. Das Gupta's labours, which ought to be emulated in other parts of India, gain fresh importance from this consideration, and will be of permanent value for purposes of reference.

"Suff Lore and Lyrics." By **Kismet, Disciple of Hazrat Inayat.** The author of this attractively produced little book writes under what is apparently a pseudonym, and gives no clue to the sources of origin or inspiration of the maxims, lyrics and fables which make up its contents. Though they have a generally Sufistic flavour, and tend towards the imagery of Islamic mysticism, they have, at the same time, a wider range, and some of the symbols belong rather to the West than the East. Mainly ethical or devotional in character, some of them are pronouncedly satirical, being reminiscent, here and there, of the French epigrammatists—partly, no doubt, or by reason of the uniform grace of their expression.

MSSs. Luzac have in the press, and almost ready for publication, a second edition of the **"Kashf Al-Mahjūb,"** the oldest Persian treatise on Sūfism, by **Ali b. Uthmān al-Jullābī al-Hujwiri**. Translated from the text of the Lahore edition, compared with MSS. in the India Office and British Museum. By **Reynold A. Nicholson.** This has long been out of print and practically unobtainable. It will contain a new introduction by Professor R. A. Nicholson.

In this second volume of **"Contributions to Persian Dialectology,"** the first of which appeared in 1930, Mr. **Christensen** deals with five distinct dialects of the region of Semnān, which lies on the Teheran-Meshed road about 140 miles from the capital. This is not his first work on the subject. A visit in 1914 resulted in the publication the following year of an essay on the dialect of Semnān itself, with notes on those of Sāngsar and Lās-jird. Mr. Christensen has now with commendable initiative seized the opportunity afforded by an invitation to attend the Firdausī millenary celebrations in Teheran in 1934 to

make a further six weeks' stay in the Semnān district and pursue his researches on the local dialects.

Previous workers in the field have been few (notable among them Zhukovski) and their material deficient. The dialect of Sourkhé, in particular, has been hitherto untouched by researchers. In the present volume the work of Mr. Christensen's predecessors has been gathered up, greatly amplified and superseded. The author is much to be congratulated on having produced for the first time a systematic grammar of each of the four dialects (that is, excluding that of Semnān dealt with in his earlier work), together with specimen texts and brief vocabularies.

Clients interested will welcome the announcement that a supplement is being issued to Brockelmann's "*Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*." This, we understand, will consist of about twenty-five parts, each of sixteen pages.

The text is of course in German, and the price of the parts will be approximately Gl. 2 each.

Further particulars are given in the advertisement columns of this list.

"*Mediaeval Indian Sculpture in the British Museum*." By Ramaprasad Chandra, F.A.S.B., Rai Bahadur. Rai Bahadur Ramaprasad Chandra, late superintendent of the Archaeological Section, Indian Museum, Calcutta, has done a real service in writing this book, which will help greatly towards a fuller appreciation of the fine collection of Indian sculpture which the British Museum owns, and which has never been adequately catalogued, described or explained.

The Rai Bahadur brings expert knowledge to his task, and, more than this, he appreciates the difficulties which sometimes stand in the way of Europeans. He explains, concisely and clearly, such matters as the various motives, the influence of notions of auspicious and inauspicious signs on the evolution of early Buddhistic and Jaina images, and other considerations which determined the complicated iconography of the religious statuary in various parts of India.

Dealing first with the origins and the early periods, he devotes separate chapters to the Gupta sculpture, to the Indo-Aryan and Dravidian Brahmanic images, to the post-Gupta sculpture of Northern India, and to the Pala art, and that of Orissa. Of the latter, of which the Museum has a number of examples, he writes with special knowledge. Some of the specimens are described in detail, and the book contains a good deal of information about dates and provenance.

Twenty-four unusually fine plates enhance the value of an extremely useful and interesting monograph, which should appeal alike to the learned and the unlearned.

It is with pleasure that we note that a start is being made in the publication of the renowned collection of the "*Oriental Manuscripts*," formed by Mr. A. Chester Beatty.

The first to be issued—in the spring, we understand—will be the "*Catalogue of Mughal Miniatures*."

A full and descriptive account appears in the advertisement columns of this list.

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